

Paul Staicu

Paul Staicu has been an orchestral player, a professor, and a conductor who escaped from behind the Iron Curtain in Romania to settle in France. He was solo horn in the Bucharest Philharmonic Orchestra (1961-1968) and professor of horn and chamber music at the Bucharest Academy (1966-1978). He founded and conducted the Constanta Symphony Orchestra in 1980, which later toured outside communist Romania, including the US in 1984 and 1989. He was denied a departure visa for many years, but in 1989, after suffering two heart attacks, he was allowed to leave Romania to serve on the jury for the Munich Woodwind Quintet Competition. Rather than return to Romania, he went to France, had heart bypass surgery, was advised to give up playing horn, and, as a conductor, founded a new orchestra in Montbéliard in northwestern France.

Paul was born in 1937 in Bucharest, Romania. He graduated from the Prague Academy of Music in 1961 and the Vienna Academy of Music in 1970. He won international competitions, including Bucharest (1953), Moscow (1957), Birmingham (1965), Geneva (1965), and Prague (1967). He adjudicated solo horn and chamber music competitions in Munich, Prague, and Cassello di Duino, Italy. His students have won international prizes and play in orchestras around the world.

Paul recorded the three Mozart concertos in E-flat as both soloist and conductor in 1987. He was awarded a Cultural Medal in Romania in 1968, the Richard Wagner Anniversary Medal in Bayreuth in 1974, and a special Life Achievement Prize and Medal of Honor from the city of Montbéliard. He was elected an IHS Honorary Member in 2017.

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